

648 Moreover, he has little fluency in Taiwanese and since many villagers do not speak Mandarin, he had an especially difficult job communicating. Using another villager as an untrained interpreter presents its own unique problems.

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• [674] The police are in charge of crime when it does occur although crime is fairly rare in the village as compared with the city. Most crimes in the rural area are classified into two types: external, as when an outsider steals material goods, or internal, as when a resident steals near-ripe agricultural products or dried wood. About half the outsiders are caught and dealt with through the courts. Most of the internal thieves are caught but rarely do the cases reach the courts. Instead, they are treated in the same manner that applies to arguments and disputes among fellow residents, i.e., the thief and victim are merely considered to be two disputants.

Mediation and Legal Processes

627 Internal disputes are usually settled internally by a process of mediation. A mediator goes back and forth between disputants listening to the respective stories and repeating them. Eventually, the two sides are brought into each other's presence. If a compromise still can not be reached, they may agree to resort to the temple to have the gods make a settlement.⁷

648 Even outside the village, Taiwan's formal system of civil courts starts with a regular mediation or

427 is not married and still earns a good income in his trade
686 and the tenant is still poor with small children, the
692 same outcome of another extension is expected. But since
the owner is seeking a wife, he plans to argue that he
too will soon have small children to support. He does
not expect to regain possession of the land but rather,
to minimize the term of the extension and set the stage
for eventual control of the land after the next lease
termination. The owner is annoyed but does not feel the
decision was unreasonable. Other villagers agree the
owner had the law on his side and a legal claim to the
land. Nevertheless, they too agree the decision was the
only "fair" solution. The owner and tenant are neighbors
and although there are some hard feelings, overt expres-
sion of them was not observed.

- 674 There have been few formal arrests of villagers and
few occasions in which villagers have appeared before a
criminal court. The son of a villager with a repair shop
in town is serving a six-month sentence on a bad check
charge which he claims was caused by someone who stole his
689 "chop." Another villager was arrested twice for being
drunk and disorderly in Hsin Tien and each time, spent the
night in jail. In addition to a small fine, he was forced
[558] to listen to a stern lecture which caused him a great loss
of face.

The major

883 exception involves girls who are hired by factories,
464 particularly clothing factories. There is one small
factory close enough to commute by bicycle daily and two
factories which pick up the girls on a truck in the morning
[434] and return them each night. Although it is expected that
each girl will turn over her money to the family, she is
economically independent and usually has pocket money of
[517] her own. On Sunday, a non-work day, these girls travel in
a group to the park, the theater, etc. Girls who work in
the same place play together. Since there are three
factories, there are three such groups, each related to a
factory and cutting across village lines although seldom
do groups include anyone living outside Talei Li.

I Ching (Voluntary Policemen)

625 The modern I Ching organization (voluntary police-
men) was started for men in good health between the ages
of 30 and 45 two to three years after the Restoration by
the regular police organization. Men are available any-
time for service but tend to be most active for the fifty
[64] days immediately preceding the lunar New Year. An old
[42] Chinese custom requires that all debts should be paid by
[79] New Year's day and the pressure to liquidate debts leads
[183] to an increase in the frequency of robbery although
robbery is a fairly common crime on Taiwan in general.
During the period of fifty days before New Year, the
I Ching mount a night patrol in Talei Li.

Each member is furnished a rain coat, flash light,

⁷⁹⁶ rare cases did any two lists exactly match. The number of
[556] items on a single list were closely related to the socio-economic status of the household, i.e., the richer the household, the longer the list, undoubtedly due to the fact celebrations are always an expense. Rarely is a religious specialist hired and rarely is entertainment provided for minor events but if entertainment is hired, it is much less expensive than that for a major event, a puppet show rather than an opera for example.

⁷⁸² A yet smaller percentage of the population use the temple for the regular bi-monthly special sacrifices (first and fifteenth or second and sixteenth of the lunar calendar).

⁷⁷⁸ The temple is rarely empty at any period from its
• ⁶⁷⁴ opening just before sunrise until its closing at bedtime. In the past, the temple was open all the time, but villagers claim it is now necessary to lock it at night because of the many thieves, particularly wandering retired Main-
⁷⁸² lander soldiers. On a typical non-special day, about 20 people, more than half of whom are women, perform some religious act in the temple such as an offering of incense. These acts are for three major purposes: thanking the gods for a past action, begging for a future favor, or merely asking advice. The most frequent underlying cause is health and second, is economics.